LEVEL news

Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

Volume 11, Number 8 August 11, 2003

PDF Format

About LEVEL news

Contents

Seasonal Rise Likely to Continue on Lake Superior Alone During August

Great Lakes Water Level Information

A Beautiful Place to Live...

...but Be Aware of the Potential Risks

Upcoming PIAG Public Meetings

July Precipitation

July Outflows

Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour ... a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service

About the monthly Water Level bulletin

July Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term July average:

Great Lakes Basin 96%

Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair) 88%

Lake Superior 110%

Lakes Michigan- 87%

Seasonal Rise Likely to Continue on Lake Superior Alone During August

Monthly mean water levels on all lakes, except Lake Ontario, increased from June to July. Only Lake Superior is expected to continue to climb during August.

Lake Superior rose by about its usual amount from June to July, while levels on lakes Michigan-Huron and St. Clair increased a bit more than they do on average. Lake Erie's level increased 1 cm instead of falling slightly as it usually does. The increases on lakes St. Clair and Erie were small but welcome given the fact that at the beginning of July it appeared that both lakes had already peaked for the year and were on their way down.

Levels on Lake Ontario declined as they usually do from June to July. Lake Ontario has fallen by about its usual amount since it peaked for the year around the middle of June-about the usual time of the year for the lake.

Lake Superior is expected to continue its seasonal rise during August. Water levels usually peak in September on Lake Superior. August levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron will depend on the total water supply the lakes receive during the month. Although levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron will likely begin to fall during August, wetter than average conditions could delay the start of their annual seasonal decline. Levels on lakes St. Clair, Erie and Ontario are expected to decline during August as lakes St. Clair and Erie begin, and Lake Ontario continues, their annual seasonal declines.

Great Lakes Water Level Information

	July Monthly Mean Level		Beginning of August Level	
Lake	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2002)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2002)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	27 cm below	10 cm below	26 cm below	11 cm below
Michigan-Huron	58 cm below	29 cm below	56 cm below	30 cm below
St. Clair	28 cm below	18 cm below	24 cm below	16 cm below

Huron				
Erie	13 cm below	6 cm below	9 cm below	2 cm below
Ontario	6 cm above	14 cm below	7 cm above	6 cm below

Lake Ontario 100%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

July Outflows From the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term July average:

Lake Superior 89%

Lake Erie 98%

Lake Huron 82%

Lake Ontario 96%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

Last Issue

Next Issue

Issue Index

Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

A Beautiful Place to Live...

The shorelines of the Great Lakes and the upper St. Lawrence River have some of the most attractive real estate in Ontario. Owning lakeshore property can be a dream come true; but that dream can become a nightmare if you are unaware of, or ignore, the potential risks.

...but Be Aware of the Potential Risks

With the below-average water level conditions we have seen over the past few years, it is easy to forget that as recently as the summer of 1997 near-record high levels were a concern. Great Lakes water levels can change significantly over a period of years due to climatic and weather trends. They change seasonally as water supplies vary throughout the year, and they can change dramatically in a matter of hours as strong winds blow over the lakes, causing a phenomenon known as "wind set-up" or "storm surge". Large waves can be an additional hazard during storm events.

You'll need to do some research before you buy or alter shoreline property to ensure that you don't end up with an expensive surprise instead of a pleasant investment. Some shoreline areas along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are at risk to flooding, erosion and dynamic beach processes.

For information that applies specifically to the shoreline property you are interested in, you should start by contacting the Conservation Authority (CA) or office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) that covers your area. Be sure to ask about any setback, zoning or shoreline alteration restrictions that may apply to the property. These will be important if you plan to make any changes or build any structures.

Upcoming PIAG Public Meetings

The International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Study is now in its third year. To ensure that the study reflects the interests of the public, the Study's Public Interest Advisory Group (PIAG) will be holding meetings in various locations along the Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River shorelines. Meetings are currently planned for September 10th in Sodus Bay, NY and September 24th in Montréal, Quebec .

For more information regarding these events, or to register your attendance, please contact Michelle Tracy at: (613) 992-5727.

Last Updated: 2003-08-11
Last Reviewed: 2003-08-11

URL: http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/water/level-news/ln200308_e.html